1. (Currently Amended) A halftone phase shift mask blank comprising a transparent

substrate and a phase shifter film thereon, the phase shifter film being composed of a metal

silicide compound containing molybdenum, wherein said compound further contains:

at least one metal selected from the group consisting of tantalum, zirconium, chromium

[[,]] and tungsten, and

at least one element-selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen [[,]] and

carbon.

2. (Previously Presented) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 1 wherein said

metal silicide compound is a silicide oxide, silicide nitride, silicide oxynitride, silicide

oxycarbide, silicide nitride carbide or silicide oxide nitride carbide containing molybdenum and

at least one metal selected from the group consisting of tantalum, zirconium, chromium, and

tungsten.

3. (Withdrawn) A method of manufacturing a halftone phase shift mask blank,

comprising the steps of:

using molybdenum silicide as a first target and at least one metal silicide selected from

the group consisting of tantalum silicide, zirconium silicide, chromium silicide, and tungsten

silicide as a second target, and

carrying out reactive sputtering in the presence of at least one reactive gas containing at

least one element selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon, while

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applying an electric power to the first and second targets at the same time, thereby forming a phase shifter film of a metal silicide compound on a transparent substrate.

4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein in the sputtering step, the surfaces of the first and second targets facing the transparent substrate are inclined at an angle of 30 to 60 degrees to the surface of the transparent substrate on which the phase shifter film is to be formed,

and the transparent substrate is rotated about its axis.

5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein the molybdenum silicide as the first

target has a molar ratio of silicon to molybdenum of up to 4, and the metal silicide as the second

target has a molar ratio of silicon to metal of at least 18.

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein said metal silicide compound is a silicide

oxide, silicide nitride, silicide oxynitride, silicide oxycarbide, silicide nitride carbide or silicide

oxide nitride carbide containing molybdenum and at least one metal selected from the group

consisting of tantalum, zirconium, chromium, and tungsten.

7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein a DC, pulse DC or RF power supply is

used to apply an electric power to the targets.

8. (New) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 1 wherein the molybdenum

component and the component of said at least one of tantalum, zirconium, chromium and

tungsten are present in an atomic ratio between 100:1 and 2:1 in said metal silicide compound.

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4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein in the sputtering step, the surfaces of the

first and second targets facing the transparent substrate are inclined at an angle of 30 to 60

degrees to the surface of the transparent substrate on which the phase shifter film is to be formed,

and the transparent substrate is rotated about its axis.

5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein the molybdenum silicide as the first

target has a molar ratio of silicon to molybdenum of up to 4, and the metal silicide as the second

target has a molar ratio of silicon to metal of at least 18.

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein said metal silicide compound is a silicide

oxide, silicide nitride, silicide oxynitride, silicide oxycarbide, silicide nitride carbide or silicide

oxide nitride carbide containing molybdenum and at least one metal selected from the group

consisting of tantalum, zirconium, chromium, and tungsten.

7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 3 wherein a DC, pulse DC or RF power supply is

used to apply an electric power to the targets.

8. (New) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 1 wherein the molybdenum

component and the component of said at least one of tantalum, zirconium, chromium and

tungsten are present in an atomic ratio between 100:1 and 2:1 in said metal silicide compound.

9. (New) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 8 wherein the atomic ratio is

between 20:1 and 4:1.

10. (New) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 1 wherein the total content of

molybdenum and said at least one of tantalum, zirconium, chromium and tungsten in said metal

silicide compound is 1 to 20 at %.

11. (New) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 10 wherein the content of

silicone in said metal silicide compound is 20 to 70 at %.

12. (New) The halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 1 wherein said metal silicide

compound is MoZrSiON, MoTaSiON or MoCrSiON,

13. (New) A method of manufacturing a halftone phase shift mask blank of claim 1,

comprising the steps of:

using molybdenum silicide as a first target and at least one metal silicide selected from

the group consisting of tantalum silicide, zirconium silicide, chromium silicide, and tungsten

silicide as a second target, and

carrying out reactive sputtering in the presence of at least one reactive gas containing at

least one element selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon, while

applying an electric power to the first and second targets at the same time, thereby forming a

phase shifter film of a metal silicide compound on a transparent substrate.

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14. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein in the sputtering step, the surfaces of the first

and second targets facing the transparent substrate are inclined at an angle of 30 to 60 degrees to

the surface of the transparent substrate on which the phase shifter film is to be formed, and the

transparent substrate is rotated about its axis.

15. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein the molybdenum silicide as the first target

has a molar ratio of silicon to molybdenum of up to 4, and the metal silicide as the second target

has a molar ratio of silicon to metal of at least 18.

16. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein said metal silicide compound is a silicide

oxide, silicide nitride, silicide oxynitride, silicide oxycarbide, silicide nitride carbide or silicide

oxide nitride carbide containing molybdenum and at least one metal selected from the group

consisting of tantalum, zirconium, chromium, and tungsten.

17. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein a DC, pulse DC or RF power supply is used

to apply an electric power to the targets.